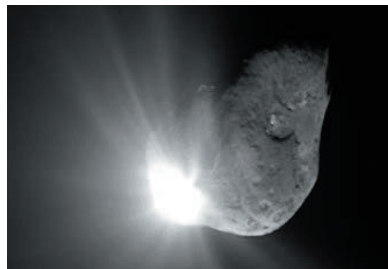


NASAE Explorer Schools News

*A monthly newsletter
for the teachers of
tomorrow's explorers*

Featured Mission



NASA's 4th of July Bash

Many Americans celebrated Independence Day with cook-outs and watching fireworks. NASA had some fireworks of its own. At 1:52 AM (Eastern Daylight Time) on July 4th, a NASA spacecraft collided

with a comet. The collision was no accident. The Deep Impact mission team had been planning this encounter for a long time.

Comets are icy bodies that orbit the sun. They are much smaller than the planets. Comets take years to make a single orbit. Comets are made of the same ice, gas and dust that formed our solar system 4.5 billion years ago. Astronomers believe that the material locked in comets has not changed much during that time. So far, scientists have only been able to study the outside of comets.

Deep Impact is really two spacecrafts that share the same name. The pair was launched last January. On July 3rd, they separated for the first time. The Deep Impact Impactor spacecraft flew into the path of the Comet Tempel 1. Early on July 4th, the comet hit the Impactor at 37,100 kilometers per hour (or 23,000 miles per hour). The impact caused an explosion that left a new crater on the surface of the comet. The Deep Impact Flyby spacecraft stayed safely out of the way. It recorded the event and sent data back to Earth. Scientists hope to learn more about the way the solar system was formed by studying the crater.

www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/deepimpact/main/index.html

For fun activities related to Deep Impact, check out:

deepimpact.jpl.nasa.gov/disczone/index.html

NES Spotlight

Chiefess Kamakahalei Middle School

Students: 1100

Teachers: 60

Chiefess Kamakahalei Middle School is a rural school on the Hawaiian island of Kauai. That makes CKMS the westernmost school in the NES program! The school is named after a Hawaiian ruler, who lived over two centuries ago. She is best known for bringing peace between the people of Hawaii and the first outsiders to come to the Hawaii islands. The school follows her spirit with their own mission to "provide an accepting

environment, which empowers all students in their academic, social and physical pursuits." CKMS hosts a science fair each year. The school supports a Math Counts team that has won many District-wide competitions and competes in Botball. They also have an astronomy club and a 6th grade course dedicated to NASA activities. CKMS may feel far away from NASA, but NASA sure is a part of CKMS!

NASA Explorers are people like you

Name: Leticia Montanez

Education: BS in Computer Science

Job Title: Testbed Manager for Deep Impact

Leticia works at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. She is responsible for running simulations of the Deep Impact spacecraft. Simulations are models used to test plans before they are used with the real Deep Impact in space. Leticia's job is to make sure everything will work properly. She also works with the Cassini spacecraft that reached Saturn last December. Leticia credits her math teachers with inspiring her to pursue a dream to become an engineer. Her advice for kids in school today is to stay in school. "You don't have to be an engineer or a scientist; it takes all types of people to make a NASA project successful," she says. Leticia plays on a Women's Ice Hockey Travel Team. About the success of the Deep Impact, Leticia says, "it was a lot of work but it was well worth it."



Bytes and Bits

Space Shuttle Discovery has returned. It is on Launch Pad 39B at NASA's Kennedy Space Center. It is on schedule for launch on July 13.

NESN Puzzler

*What NASA telescope took this famous picture of the
Eagle Nebula?*

The first ten individual NES students to send the correct answer will win a NASA prize! Send us your name, your teacher's name, your school's name and the school's address. Answer to last month's puzzler: Albert Einstein.



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

<http://learners.gsfc.nasa.gov/NESNews>

Please send comments or questions to NESNews@nasa.gov